

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IOE-00
/092 W

-----112052Z 024462 /73

P R 110808Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1978
INFO U.S. UN NEW YORK 1792
U.S. MISSION GENEVA 2495

UNCLAS BANGKOK 10128

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: 24TH UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL: UNDP REPORT ON ITS FUTURE ROLE

REF: (A) STATE 086320 (B) BANGKOK 9913

1. WE DISCUSSED FUTURE ROLE OF UNDP AND QUESTIONS RAISED
REF. (A) WITH DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL WANCHAI SIRIRATTNA
OF DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION (DTEC).
WANCHAI IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING MULTILATERAL
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. LIKE UNDP RESREP GARCIA HE WAS VERY
OPEN AND CANDID IN HIS REMARKS.

2. WANCHAI WAS CRITICAL OF EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN WHICH
EXPERTS SCRATCH EACH OTHERS BACKS. MANY OF HIS REMARKS
PARALLELED GARCIA'S. HE FEELS INDEPENDENT EVALUATION IS
NECESSARY AND URGES USE OF A SYSTEM THAT WILL DECREASE
TENDENCY FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS WHICH ARE MAKING
ONLY A MARGINAL CONTRIBUTION.

3. WANCHAI STRONGLY SUPPORTS ROLE OF UNDP RESREP AS
PROPER FOCUS FOR COUNTRY COORDINATION. HE CITED JACKSON
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REPORT OF SEVERAL YEARS AGO AS EXPOUNDING THIS VIEW AND
REGRETTED THAT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS WERE NOT MORE VIGOROUSLY
PURSUED. (REFERENCE WAS NOT FAMILIAR TO REPORTING OFFICERS.)
WANCHAI WAS CRITICAL OF ESCAP AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES WHICH
HE SAID CONFUSE CONTRY PLANNING AND ALLOW PROJECTS TO GO
FORWARD UNDER REGIONAL UMBRELLA WHICH REALLY HAVE VERY
LITTLE INTEREST TO MOST OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION. IN

MUCH OF DISCUSSION ON THIS AND OTHER POINTS, WANCHAI STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF SPENDING AVAILABLE RESOURCES ON THOSE ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT AND PROMISE THE HIGHEST RETURNS. WHILE NOT DIRECTLY STATED, WE WOULD THEREFORE CONCLUDE HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE IMPROVEMENTS IN PROGRAMMING SYSTEM THAT WOULD RESULT IN BETTER PERFORMANCE IN THIS AREA.

4. WANCHAI POINTED OUT THAT EVEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE CONTRIBUTING SIGNIFICANTLY TO UNDP ACTIVITIES, IN THAILAND'S SCASE THROUGH: (A) DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO UNDP FUND, (B) SUPPORT OF UNDP OFFICE HERE, (C) LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PROJECTS, (D) COUNTERPART SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS, AND (E) ASSESSED PROGRAM COSTS.

5. ON SUBJECT OF INCREASED RESOURCES, WANCHAI MENTIONED AND DECRIED NON CONVERTIBLE CURRENCIES WHICH BOTTLE UP POTENTIAL FUNDS. HE ALSO SAID REDUCTION OF UNDP OVER-HEAD COSTS WOULD INCREASE AVAILABILITIES FOR PROJECTS BUT FELT UNDP WAS ALREADY MAKING SERIOUS EFFORT IN THIS DIRECTION. HE SAID UNDP TCDC CONCEPT (TECHINCAL COOPERATION FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES) COULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. THAILAND IS FINANCING ITS OWN TCDC AS ADDITIONAL TO, RATHER THAN OUT OF, UNDP FUNDING. UNDP FUNDS COULD GO FURTHER IF OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD DO THE SAME.

6. WANCHAI BELIEVES SINGLE GENERAL FUND PREFER FOR MOST RATIONAL PROGRAMMING AND EFFECTIVE USE OF FUNDS. SEE PARA 3 ABOVE.

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7. WANCHAI DOES NOT FAVOR A STANDING INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE. HE WISELY SUGGESTS CUTTING THE OVERBURDENING PAPER WORK RATHER THAT CREATING A COMMITTEE TO COPE WITH IT.

8. CONSISTENT WITH HIS REMARKS UNDER PARA 3 ABOVE, WANCHAI RECOMMENDS CONTINUATION OF CURRENT COUNTRY FOCUS ALTHOUGH HE AGREES IN PRINCIPLE WITH NEED FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM ORIENTED APPROACH.

9. WANCHAI EXPRESSED SURPRISE, WHEN TOLD OF GARCIA'S CALL FOR BETTER UNDP RESPONSE ESPECIALLY WHERE QUICK LOW COST ACTIONS WERE CALLED FOR. HE SAID HE THOUGHT GARCIA HAD AUTHORITY TO ACT ON PROPOSALS UP TO \$40,000 WITHOUT HEAD-QUARTERS APPROVAL.

WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770166-0440
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770572/aaaacjyr.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2ef44497-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 86320, 77 BANGKOK 9913
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2576231
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 24TH UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL: UNDP REPORT ON ITS FUTURE ROLE
TAGS: EAID, UNDP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2ef44497-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009